

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BELGRADE 6250

EO 11652 GDS

TAGS: PFOR YO US AO

SUBJ: BRITISH FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER'S COMMENTS ON ANGOLA

SITUATION

1. AT DINNER HELD IN BELGRADE FOR VISITING BRITISH DEFENCE COLLEGE STUDENTS, EMBCOUNS TALKED WITH BRITISH FOREIGN OFFICE OFFICIAL RECENTLY IN ANGOLA AS BRITISH OBSERVER AT MERCENARIES' TRIAL.

2. THIS OFFICER, WHO SAID HE HAD FINISHED UP IN ANGOLA ABOUT TWO MONTHS AGO AND WHO HAD PREVIOUSLY SERVED IN MOZAMBIQUE, OFFERED THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS:

A. SOVIETS HAVE DUG THEMSELVES DEEPLY INTO THE SECURITY ADMINISTRATION IN ANGOLA AND HAVE ABOUT 200 PERSONNEL WORKING IN THE POLICE AND INTERIOR APPARATUS. BRITISH OFFICER SAID THAT THIS WAS AN "EFFICIENT GROUP THAT COULD BE WRAPPED UP QUICKLY" IN CASE OF TROUBLE.

B. CUBAN MILITARY ARE STILL HEAVILY ENGAGED IN FIGHTING AND UNITA HAS BEEN INFlicting FAIRLY SIZEABLE CASUALTIES ON CUBAN FORCES. PORT OF LOBITO WAS AT ONE POINT CLOSED FOR THIRTY-SIX HOURS WHILE

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CUBAN DEAD AND WOUNDED WERE PUT ON SHIPS FOR RETURN

TO CUBA.

C. ON THE OTHER HAND, CUBAN TROOPS ARE "GUARDING"
GULF OIL INSTALLATIONS IN THE CABINDA AREA
(PRESUMABLY TO KEEP THEM FROM COMING UNDER ATTACK
OF FNLA OR OTHER ANTI-NETO FORCES).

D. INTERNAL FACTIONAL FIGHTING WITHIN MPLA IS
INTENSE.

3. WHILE NONE OF THE ABOVE MAY BE SIGNIFICANT TO
COGNOSCENTI OF SITUATION, WE PASS IT ALONG NONETHELESS.
AS TO POLICY PRESCRIPTIONS FOR ANGOLA, THE BRITISH
OFFICER. WHEN PUSHED, HAD NONE EXCEPT THAT
US SHOULD PAY DUE REGARD TO WHAT HE CALLED
"YEASTY AFRICAN DIMENSION". THROUGHOUT THE DINNER
DISCUSSION HE NEVER DEFINED OR ELABORATED THIS NOTION.
HE ALSO SAID HE THOUGHT YUGOSLAVS SHOULD BE ALLOWED
TO PLAY A ROLE IN ANGOLA; THE YUGOSLAV AMBASSADOR
THERE WAS VERY BRIGHT AND YUGOSLAV NEWS AGENCY
TANJUG WAS BEST INFORMED. WHEN ASKED TO DESCRIBE
WHAT HE THOUGHT YUGOSLAVS COULD ACCOMPLISH, HE
DRIFTED INTO VAGUE REFERENCES ABOUT HOW
NON-ALIGNED YUGOSLAVIA COULD "STEER" ANGOLA
AWAY FROM SOVIETS.

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